
Sermon Text Discussion Notes 7/29/2018

Ruth 4 by Taylor Sutton

Overview

The book of Ruth concludes better than the reader could have hoped. The lineage of Naomi and Ruth is preserved by a redeemer (Boaz) who treats them with great kindness. Ruth and Boaz end up together despite the potential she may be redeemed by a different kinsman. The Lord then blesses Ruth with a son, who not only carries on the family name but also is a prominent figure in the lineage of both David and (later) Jesus. Here is a summary from the text:

- 1) Boaz graciously and generously redeems Ruth (v.1-12)
- 2) Naomi finally gets a son (v.13-17)
- 3) Ruth's son, Obed, is David's grandfather (v.18-22)

These blessings shown to Ruth and Naomi allow us to see what God is like and how he will act toward his people (us!) in the future.

Quotations

"The text does not fault the kinsman for being responsible, for not taking on more than he could manage. Rather it portrays Boaz's actions as truly extraordinary." -R.L. Hubbard

"Can it really be true as religion says, that we shall all rise from the dead, and come to life, and see one another again, and everyone, and llyuschechka?' Alyosha replies, 'Certainly we shall rise, certainly we shall see and gladly, joyfully tell one another all that has been.' And then the boy who asked the question bursts out, 'Ah, how good that will be.'" -Fyodor Dostoevsky

Understanding & Application

- 1) As if speaking to someone who has never heard the story, recount the ways the Lord graciously blesses Ruth and Naomi.
- 2) In light of your answer to question 1 above, explain to that same person what these blessings reveal about the nature of God. How should we then respond? To see how Naomi's response changed in light of these events, read verses 1:20-21 followed by 4:14-17.
- 3) Why was it so important to widowed Naomi and Ruth to have a son? What risk and cost did Boaz take on in order to redeem Ruth?
- 4) Given our own 21st century American cultural context, how should we understand Ruth seemingly being treated as "property" in 4:5?
- 5) Interact with the following statement: Even when God seems absent, his redeeming kindness is at work often through the kindness of regular people. Share a time when you've seen or heard this to be true.
- 6) How can we encourage one another to embrace the significance of our non-significant life? What can/does/will fuel our call to joyfully serve God in relative obscurity?